

# MUSICAL SAW NEWS

**PUBLISHED MARCH, JULY, AND NOVEMBER**

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ISSUE No. 38

March, 2000

EDITORS: Lillian & Luther Harris

## **HAPPY YEAR 2000!**

To all Musical Saw Newsletter readers, we wish you the best in this year of a new century. We hope your year started out healthy and will continue to do so through the Millenium.

We thank all of our faithful subscribers who have allowed us to continue publishing MSN for the past 12 years. I remember how it all began. During the 1987 Saw Festival held in Santa Cruz, Luther and I decided to stop at fast-food Wendy's for dinner. Charlie Blacklock and his wife Viola happened to be in the same restaurant. We joined them for our meal and the conversation turned toward the need for a newsletter for musical saw players to keep them informed of events, etc. The rest is history.....here is our 38th issue.

Over the years we have heard from saw players in many parts of the world and we know there must be some we have missed. We appreciate your thanks and comments. We hope that each of you pass on our mailing address to other saw players you become acquainted with either in person or on the internet. We have a lot to learn from each other.

**March is our renew-your-subscription month. If that time has arrived for you, a red dot will be on your label. We hope you will want to continue receiving Musical Saw News. Thanks, the Editors.**

## **YEAR 2000 SAW PLAYING EVENTS**

### **SAW FESTIVAL AND PICNIC**

**Sat./Sun. July 15-16, 2000 - Roaring Camp, Santa Cruz, California**

Once again, Charlie and Viola Blacklock and the California Saw Players Association are busy planning the annual Saw Festival and Picnic held each year at Roaring Camp, near Santa Cruz, California. Festivities will start on Saturday, July 15 at 1 p.m. in downtown Santa Cruz and continue on Sunday, July 16 on the grounds of Roaring Camp. (see enclosed flyer for map)

There will also be a Saw Players Competition on Sunday. (see back of flyer for Competition Entry Form). Judges will be the same as last year, David Weiss, Morgan Cowin, and Ken Blacklock. The event has truly been an international one over the years with saw players in attendance from China , Japan, Australia and England. Charlie expects international visitors to participate this year as well. It is a good idea to call now for hotel/motel reservations in Santa Cruz. Rooms fill up fast in summer months. Call or write to the Santa Cruz County and Conference Visitors Council, 701 Front Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, telephone 1-831-425-1260, or email: [info@sccvc.org](mailto:info@sccvc.org). For further information regarding the Saw Players Music Festival/Picnic and Contest, contact Charlie and Vi Blacklock, 1821 St. Charles St., Alameda, CA 94501, telephone: 510-523-4649. See you there!



## **MUSICAL SAW FESTIVAL, LENEXAS, KANSAS**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 2000**

Saw Players in the Kansas area will have a chance to attend the Eighth Annual Midwest Gathering of the Saws on Sunday, August 20, 2000. The Festival is sponsored by Jim Curley, Shawnee, Kansas and Tom Bogardus from Lawrence, Kansas. The free event is held each year at Shawnee Mission Park in Lenexa, Kansas, at Highway 435 and Rinner Road. Jim reports saw players should look for Walnut Grove Shelter House, Shelter #10 and is situated amidst beautiful old shade trees. The shelter is adjacent to a playground which allows saw players to participate while watching their children at play. Saw Players can take advantage of the open stage, scheduled performances and workshops. Bring lawn chairs and a picnic lunch. For further information, call Jim Curley at (913) 962-9711 or contact by email: Jcurley171@aol.com.

## **OLD TIME COUNTRY MUSIC CONTEST & FESTIVAL, AVOCA, IOWA**

**AUGUST 28-SEPTEMBER 3, 2000**

Saw Players are welcome bring their saws and participate in the Old-Time Country Music Contest & Festival in Avoca, Iowa. From spoons and bones, to harmonica, rag time piano, bull fiddle, dobra guitar, and yes, musical saw. You will find it all at this fun-packed week filled with so many music contests your head will spin trying to decide which event to attend. For a list of events and registration information write to: Bob Everhart, Director, National Traditional Country Music Assoc., P.O. Box 492, Anita, Iowa, 50020 or call 712-762-4363.

## **MSN SURVEY RESULTS**

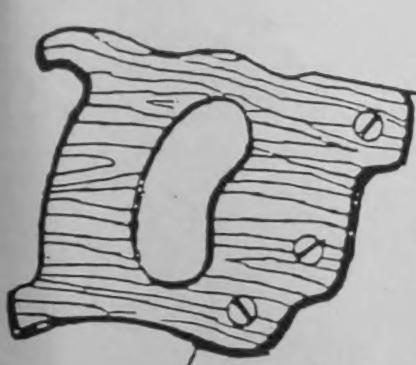
Musical Saw News received several responses to our survey request. Seems as though many readers heard their first saw player in church, played by either the Minister or a church member. Others heard them in far away places such as South Korea and China. Saw players also do not necessarily start playing the saw immediately after hearing one played. They usually wait on the average about 30 years before giving our unusual instrument a try. Most of you begin learning alone but may send for instructional material from veteran saw players, Supersaw Jim Leonard, or Charlie Blacklock. You all agree playing the saw takes practice, practice, practice.

You also produce the musical sound from a variety of different saws, Handyman, Disston, Blacklock Specials, Sandviken Stradivarius, a 30" hand saw made in Germany, Nicholson, and Mussehl & Westphal.

Your choice of music is hymns, gospel, classical and old songs from the 1920s to the 1950s. Some of you play with a musical group but most perform solo at churches, schools, retirement centers, hospitals, festivals, county fairs, etc.

Our response proved that we need more saw festivals around the country. Many would like to attend the Santa Cruz festival but find it difficult to travel that far. We have repeatedly been asked if a festival could be started on the East Coast. If there is someone out there interested in starting one, write and let us know. We can make suggestions on how to coordinate the event.

On occasion, we will profile saw players in MSN. You all have your own saw playing story. Let us hear from you.



Presented by the

California  
Saw Player's  
Association

## SAW PLAYER'S (and Friends)

Since 1978

# PICNIC & MUSIC FESTIVAL AT **ROARING CAMP**

Old-Time Fiddlers • Bluegrass • Classical • Country • Folk  
Singers • Acoustic Instruments • Musical Saws • Harmonicas • Accordions  
Guitars • Banjos • And MORE! (Bring YOUR instrument!)

*International  
Musical Saw  
Contest* Sunday, July 16, 2000  
10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

*Musical Saw  
Workshop*

## ALL MUSICIANS INVITED!

Jamming & Open Mike All day July 16

Roaring Camp parking lot jamming until 10:00 PM July 15  
(OVERNIGHT PARKING FOR SELF-CONTAINED RV'S)

Street Playing  
in Santa Cruz  
Pacific Mall  
near statue of  
saw player  
Tom Scribner,  
Saturday  
July 15  
1:00 P.M.

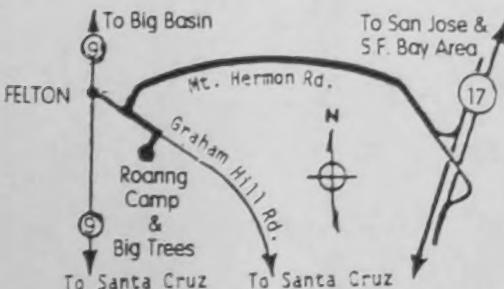
## Come and Join in the Fun!

**FREE!**

(but small parking fee)

### For Festival Information:

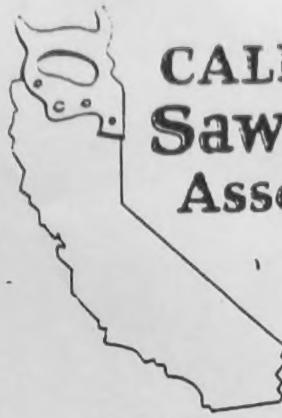
Call: Charlie Blacklock  
(510)523-4649  
1821 St. Charles St.  
Alameda, CA 94501



### For Directions to

Roaring Camp & Big Trees  
in Felton, north of Santa Cruz  
Call: (831)335-4484

Take the Mount Hermon exit off Highway 17 to Graham Hill Rd., then left,  
or take Graham Hill Road out of Santa Cruz



# CALIFORNIA Saw Players Association

## CONTEST INFORMATION

So that we can fit everything into the program we want everyone that is planning to enter the contest to Pre-register. Fill in the registration slip below and send to us by July 1, 2000. There will be an entry fee of \$5.00. This is to help out with the contest expenses. The contest will be on Sunday, July 16 at the Roaring Camp Festival. Those planning to enter the contest should register by 10:00 A.M. near the main stage and be ready to play by 11:00 A.M. at the Contest Stage. This year the Contest Stage will be East of the main stage. You are asked to play Auld Lang Syne without accompaniment. This piece is known all over the world. In some places it is called "Friendship Forever". Time allotted in the contest will depend on the number of contestants. Top winners may play one piece on main stage in the afternoon.

All saw players are asked to play in the "Chorus of Saws" at 2:00 P.M..

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## International Musical

### Saw Contest Entry Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Play one piece with any kind of accompaniment or without.

Play Auld Lang Syne without accompaniment.

Mail this form (or a copy) by July 1, 2000 to -

Charlie & Viola Blacklock  
1821 St. Charles St.  
Alameda, CA 94501-1118

Phone (510) 523-4649



## **PROFILES.....**

**Jack R. Smith, Victoria, B.C., Canada,** 71 years young, heard his first saw player at Lambrick Park Church, in Victoria, B.C., Canada. The saw that was played had a red handle, was about 30 inches long and had the teeth filed off. That was 1978. Twenty years later, Jack decided to learn how to play the saw and still has not heard any saw players other than himself and the church member in the Lambrick Park Church. He plays two carpenter saws, the Stanley Handyman Crosscut 15-528 and the Nicholson Silver Steel 300, and two professional musical saws, the Sandviken Stradivarius and a Blacklock Special Mini Bass modified to 32" in length and re-tapered the same as the Stanley Handyman crosscut. He uses a Czech made bass bow, with a back up used cello bow, and rosin from Austria. Jack had some suggestions of interest to saw players.

Jack writes "When a carpenter's saw is new it is very sharp, and quite dangerous to handle. The sharp teeth should be made dull by putting the saw in a vice, and filing the teeth down about 1/3. The back of the saw, where the bow touches is fairly rough when new, and should be conditioned, not with a file, but with #600 or finer sanding paper. Rub the back of the blade back and forth, from one end to the other until it is smooth, like the side of the saw, this may take about 20 minutes, but it really pays off!"

He also had some ideas about rosin. Rosin, he says, should not be allowed to collect on the back of the saw as it creates a faltering musical sound, cause screeching, and the bow will catch on the built up rosin. He keeps the back of his saw impeccably clean at all times, removing the rosin from the blade after 10 minutes of playing. Less rosin will also result in a cleaner bow and produce beautiful music.

Jack carries a Permatex Hand Cleaner with him in a cold cream jar with a few small pieces of folded paper towels and often cleans the back of his saw blade, which he claims will stop rosin build up. He lets the cleaner sit on the blade for a minute or two, wipes it away with clean toweling and then cleans the entire saw. The hand cleaner which contains Lanolin prohibits the steel blade from rusting.

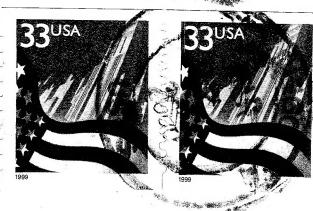
When Jack first began to play his saws in public he played hymns without accompaniment. He obtained a City of Victoria Buskers Permit and played at the Victoria Inner Harbour Promenade. While busking, he met an elderly gentleman who plays a Hammond-style organ. The two now entertain each week at the Oak Bay Kiwanis Pavilion in Victoria.

Jack would like to attend the Santa Cruz Festival and hopes to this year. His desire is to hear four types of saws, from high to low, play harmony as a Quartet. What a challenge for Santa Cruz attendees!!! Hope to see you there, Jack!

## **MSN RENEWAL REMINDER**

**Remember March is Renewal Month. If you have a red dot on your label, it is time to send your donation. It's still only \$4.00 for USA and \$5.00 Overseas. Thanks, Readers. MSN Editors.**

MUSICAL SAW NEWS  
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G66 IPQ SCOTLAND

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Thanks to all of you that continue to support MUSICAL SAW NEWS. You can still obtain a subscription for only \$4.00. (Outside USA, \$5.00).

Yes. I would like to subscribe to MUSICAL SAW NEWS. My check is enclosed. (Outside USA, please send a \$5.00 money order).

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